

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: November 14, 2003

TO: Park and Recreation Board, Agenda of November 20, 2003

SUBJECT: Park Boulevard Promenade

REFERENCES: Park and Recreation Board Report for the October 30, 2003 Meeting

At the October 30, 2003 meeting on the Park Boulevard Promenade project, the Park and Recreation Board raised several issues for staff to address relative to master plan policies and the Environmental Impact Report. As a result, the Board continued the project in order to have more time to review the documents.

The information provided in this memorandum outlines the overarching policy issues related to the proposed Park Boulevard Promenade provide and is intended to provide a framework for discussion at the meeting on November 20, 2003.

Land Use/Planning Policy Issues

1. Should the Zoo be allowed to expand its exhibit area into the existing parking lot?

Expanding the zoological gardens in Balboa Park is a significant policy issue that has been discussed during the last four years of processing the Park Boulevard Promenade project. This issue was the topic of the Working Group and the City Council Natural Resources and Culture (NR&C) Committee. During the design charrette for the Working Group in August 2000, 15 of the 16 charrette teams proposed that the Zoo be allowed to expand. Two of the 16 teams proposed consideration of expansion outside the Zoo's leasehold. A majority of the design options detailed a mix of Zoo use with parking and open space.

On October 3, 2001, the NR&C Committee voted 5-0 to support the concept of pursuing more space for the San Diego Zoo. Additionally, while not a member of the NR&C committee, Councilmember Toni Atkins spoke from the audience in support of the motion.

The discussions of additional zoological gardens space have focused on the information presented below.

Since 1916, Balboa Park has been home to the San Diego Zoo, operated by the not-for-profit Zoological Society of San Diego. The Zoological Society was formed to care for

the City's exotic animals left behind at the conclusion of the Panama-California Exposition of 1914-16. The City set aside land for a Zoo in Balboa Park in exchange for the Zoological Society's agreement to care for the animals and operate and maintain a Zoo. The relationship continues today, embodied in a Lease dated July 23, 1979, in which the City leases to the Zoological Society 99.43 acres for zoological gardens and 24.67 acres for a public parking lot. In exchange for the land, the Zoological Society is required to "preserve, maintain and care for such animals, birds, reptiles, plants, progeny and product thereof . . ." In 1934, the citizens of San Diego approved a small mill (property) tax to generate revenue to maintain the zoological gardens in Balboa Park. That mill tax generates approximately \$3 million to \$4 million each year. The Zoological Society has reported that the annual costs for caring for the City's animal collection is approximately \$75 million.

Since 1916, the San Diego Zoo has become world renowned for its education, conservation, preservation, research and innovative exhibits. Today, modern management techniques have lead to the development of larger, more naturalistic enclosures, creating complex habitats and immersion experiences for Zoo guests. These current, bioclimatic, designs are exemplified by Ituri Forest, Gorilla Tropics, and Tiger River. These designs have measurable success in species reproduction. Prior to Gorilla Tropics, the Zoo experienced two gorilla births in its history. Since the new design in 1999, there is nearly one gorilla birth per year.

In 1984, the Zoo adopted a long-range Bioclimatic Plan to redevelop all its exhibits based on the latest naturalist designs. However, full build out of that plan would require a total of 132.69 usable acres. Within the Zoo's leasehold, current useable acreage and acreage from intensifying uses in unused or under-utilized areas yield 77 useable acres in the existing zoological gardens. Redeveloping the parking lot pursuant to the proposed Park Boulevard Promenade project adds approximately 17 useable acres. (The remaining area of the existing lot is used for the greenbelt, miniature railroad and War Memorial Building parking.) This still leaves a shortfall that will be addressed by meeting more needs at the Wild Animal Park, giving priority to exhibiting animals/species which require the tropical climate of Balboa Park, and down-scaling some of the exhibits in the 1984 plan.

The Zoological Society has prepared a working paper entitled *The San Diego Zoo Past, Present & Future. An Examination of Space Needs of the San Diego Zoo in Balboa Park (2000)* ("White Paper") which was distributed to the Working Group as well as the Planning Commission in the earlier stages of the project. As identified in the Zoo's White Paper, the main purpose for the expansion is to gain more space to convert the out-of-date animal/botanical exhibits to more naturalistic, mixed-species, bioclimatic areas. The Zoo is able to meet some of its space needs by intensifying land uses located within the existing exhibit space areas (specifically on underutilized steep slopes and narrow mesa areas) and by transferring some exhibits and support facilities to the Wild Animal Park

and other locations. For instance, the Zoo's merchandise operation is located in Rancho Bernardo. "Back of the house" operations have been minimized at the Zoo to the maximum extent possible. However, as described in the White Paper and pointed out on the Board's tour of the zoological gardens, the Zoo's exhibit needs can only be accommodated by the expansion of exhibit space into the existing parking lot. There is no other space available for such expansion.

A few members of the public have raised concerns that the Zoo is consuming parkland. The existing parking lot, however, is already part of the Zoological Society's leasehold. Thus, converting this asphalt-covered area into an area in which animals are exhibited does not remove land from the public domain. The proposed parking structure will more than replace any parking that is lost by this conversion (net gain of over 2000 spaces,) and part of the parking lot will be transformed into a public greenbelt. In fact, by releasing some of the parking lot to the greenbelt, the Zoological Society will end up leasing slightly *less* land from the City than it currently does. Additionally, the recent Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking study has identified a number of other areas within Balboa Park that can be recaptured for active and passive park use.

2. Is additional parking needed in Balboa Park?

Projected visitor demand and parking space needs throughout the park were examined as part of the Working Group process in July and September of 2000. The final Report of the *"Working Group for the Proposed Balboa Park Master and Precise Plan Amendments and the Zoological society of San Diego Leasehold"* (December 14, 2000) pages C-110 through C-112 contains information provided by the Park and Recreation staff and pages C-168 and C-160 is the information provided by several of the cultural institutions. Additionally, the Naval Medical Center and City College provided the Working Group with a summary of their parking needs (pages C-140 and C-141). Subsequently, in October 2001, the Zoo retained Economic Research Associates (ERA) to conduct a parking demand analysis. Specifically, ERA reviewed current and historical Zoo attendance patterns and updated resident and tourist market information. Following is a summary of the conclusions:

- Currently, there are about 6,650 parking spaces in the Central Mesa area including the Prado area, the Zoo, the Palisades and Inspiration Point.
- General recreational park users (playground, picnickers, etc.) require 2,538 spaces based on the National Recreation and Park Association standards, as presented to the Working Group.
- The Zoo based its parking demand on an ERA analysis of population/tourism growth projections in the market areas and the market penetration rates projected to 2020. The Zoo anticipates a 33 percent increase in Zoo visitors between 2000

and 2020 (3.5 million to 4.426 million). The Zoo employee and visitor demand will be 3,900 spaces, assuming 20 percent of visitors come by means other than private car with 3.3 people per car, which are aggressive assumptions.

- Other large park institutions estimate their parking demands, collectively, will be equal to the Zoo – meaning another 3,900 spaces for them.
- Total demand for a typical busy day is estimated to be 10,338 in 2020. This serves the park 90 percent of the time, additional overflow parking would be needed for the remaining 25 days a year that are busier. For the Zoo alone, this is up to an additional 1,000 spaces.

2020 Overall Parking Demand (spaces) (based on a typical busy day – "design day")*	
General Park Users	2,538
Cultural Institutions	3,900
Zoo	3,900
Total Demand	10,338
Total Supply (including the 5,352 spaces proposed in the Park Promenade project)	8,718
Potential Short Fall	1,620

* This serves the park 90% of the time, additional overflow parking would be needed for the remaining 25 days per year that are busier. For the Zoo alone the 1,000 additional overflow spaces would be needed.

- Structure Locations and Sizing Factors. The major factors in determining the location and size of the proposed parking structure were:
 - The popularity of the North Prado as a destination. The North Prado includes many popular cultural institutions: the Zoo, Spanish Village, Natural History Museum, Rose Garden, Fleet Science Center, Prado complex and Junior Theater. The Zoo by itself currently attracts 3.5 million visitors, which is 50% of all the visitors to cultural institutions in the entire Central Mesa. Due to the area's popularity, the Zoo now uses off-site parking areas 100 days per year to accommodate Zoo visitor parking demand.
 - Replacement of Eliminated Spaces. At a minimum, the eliminated spaces (3,293) need to be replaced, but this does not account for current parking deficits or future growth.
 - The physical and cultural constraints on the site. The proposed Park

Boulevard Promenade Parking Structure was designed to respect the existing historical area and the existing leaseholds. For this reason the parking structure foot print is contoured around Spanish Village and the Natural History Museum. As such a 4-level, below-ground public parking structure can accommodate a maximum of 4,803 public parking spaces.

3. If the Zoo's exhibit area expands into the existing parking lot, where should replacement parking be located?

a. Is the proposed underground structure the best location?

The EIR examined several locations for a parking structure. No site is perfect, but the location of the proposed parking structure is the best location along Park Boulevard within Balboa Park because the main entrance has direct access to Park Boulevard and Zoo Place. Since a majority of the project-related traffic utilizes freeways, access to freeway interchanges is very important. Park Boulevard has limited access to I-5 and SR-163, while Zoo Place via Florida Drive and Pershing Drive has full interchange access to I-5. Having direct access to Park Boulevard and Zoo Place provides more direct access to the freeways. When compared to an alternative parking structure location where direct access is only to Park Boulevard, freeway access becomes more circuitous and additional traffic is added to Park Boulevard in reaching Zoo Place. Moreover, other locations, such as Inspiration Point or the City's maintenance yard, would require expensive, obtrusive transportation systems, ranging from monorails to an over abundance of buses, and could overwhelm the smaller roads they adjoin. The East Mesa is built on a landfill which cannot support a large parking structure. Some of the proposed alternatives (e.g., relocating the Girl Scout camp or replacing the War Memorial building) are too distant, would destroy other valuable uses, or both. Splitting this amount of parking into several sites would create traffic problems on the smaller roads those sites adjoin and cause people to drive around and search for parking if the first structure they visit is full. The Working Group preferred this location because the members didn't want the garage to appear to be for Zoo use only.

Finally, using the existing Zoo parking lot would not work because it would preclude the expansion of exhibit space that the Zoo needs to be viable into the future. Even an underground structure there would prevent that area from being used for exhibits: The weight of soil used in the exhibit would threaten the structure, water from the exhibit areas would infiltrate the structure, and the hard surface of the structure would prevent contouring exhibits to resemble the natural habitats which benefit both the animals and the experience of visitors. Using the existing parking lot as the site of the new parking structure would not protect "parkland" because the parking lot is already reserved as part of the Zoo's

leasehold, and the project has been designed so carefully that the leasehold will actually shrink by about 1 acre.

b. Should the parking structure be underground?

An above-ground parking structure large enough to hold the number of vehicles typically visiting this part of the Park would be extremely large and have significant visual impacts - the proposed underground structure, for example, will contain four levels of parking. Any above-ground structure that large would block views, interfere with pedestrian movement, be out of scale for the site, and dramatically harm the feel and setting of this area of Balboa Park.

Some people have expressed concerns about whether the public will use an underground structure or feel unsafe in one. Underground parking structures are common downtown, in places ranging from office buildings to residential high-rises. The San Diego Convention Center and adjacent Marriott Hotel also successfully utilize large underground parking structures. Parking structures also are becoming common at major tourist destinations. The industry standard is that visitors will feel comfortable with them if there is adequate security. Security in the area is strong, and providing most parking in one location helps security by reducing the number of lots to be patrolled. Most people will be present at the structure at the same time as other people, during normal park visiting hours, and will thus have no reason to be concerned about isolation. In fact, the structure has been designed with large, nearly flat floors to limit the sense of isolation that can arise from a “sloped” or “scissored” floors. The light well proposed for the structure will provide light, air and greenery. Because of the extensive light wells, the design is similar to the garage built at Universal Studios in Los Angeles. That garage is built into a hillside and is essentially closed on three of the four sides with natural light and air on the fourth side.

The garage is designed to be either actively or passively managed. On heavy attendance days, there would be staff present to direct traffic to each level until it is filled and then they would move to the next level. Staff would be at each level directing cars to the stalls in a systematic fashion. There is no parking on ramps, so visitors would park only on flat floor plates and walk directly to the nearest elevator or escalator, easily identifiable by the light wells. On light days, one or more levels would be closed, and visitors would be directed where to park via signage. The vertical transportation takes visitors directly to the Promenade. Either escalator/elevator location in the main garage is within 400 feet of the new Zoo entrance. By contrast, the farthest end of the existing parking lot is more than 1,300 feet from the Zoo entrance.

c. What size should the structure be?

During the Working Group process, the Zoo was encouraged to design a parking structure that would meet the Zoo's future parking needs as well as address some of the needs of the other cultural institutions located in the Prado area.

Consultants have calculated that by the year 2020, the Zoo will need about 3,900 parking spaces and that the other nearby cultural institutions of the Park will need a similar number. The proposed project will remove 3,293 spaces (mostly by converting the Zoo's parking lot), but add 5,352 spaces (mostly, but not entirely, in the parking structure). The net increase of more than 2,000 spaces is expected to accommodate all of the Zoo's future parking needs and approximately one-third of the needs of the other cultural institutions located nearby.

d. Is the proposed parking structure the best design?

At this stage of planning (proposed amendments to the Master Plan and Precise Plan), the "design" of the structure is partly conceptual. However, the general design has significant advantages. Most of the structure will be underground and thus not be visible from outside. Placing it underground allows a promenade to be on its surface. The proposed light wells will provide light, air and greenery, reaffirming the feeling of being in a park. And as mentioned above, the large, nearly flat floors will improve security.

4. How does the underground structure relate to the Zoo's leasehold?

The underground parking structure will be a public facility and will not be part of the Zoo's leasehold area. The actual underground structure will lie partially under the Zoo's main entrance and mostly under

5. Why should there be employee parking inside the leasehold when the Zoo needs more exhibit space?

The short answer is that employees need to park somewhere, and having them park within the Zoo frees up that much space outside the Zoo for other park users. As the single largest employer in Balboa Park, it seemed appropriate for the Zoo to attempt to park some of its employees inside the Zoo in an area least suitable for animal exhibits.

The particular location chosen for the employee parking lot is not well suited for exhibits: It is unusually steep and near a busy freeway. Its steep terrain makes it very difficult to comply with the ADA for public access to exhibits. The amount of land being used is enough to serve many employees but is an insignificant portion (less than 4%) of the Zoo's leasehold.

6. How does this project comply with the existing plan's policies regarding parking?

The Park Boulevard Promenade project represents a re-arranging of the use of surface land areas. The multi-level, underground parking structure will increase the total number of parking spaces. At the same time, the project will increase what most people think of as open parkland because part of several parking lots (e.g., by the Zoo and by Spanish Village) will be converted to more natural uses. Advantageously, the parking structure will actually reduce traffic within the Park by diverting cars from the park's core. Thus, open parkland will increase, the land area devoted to cars will decrease, and the number of parking spaces will increase. Additionally, prior to development of the proposed project plan amendments, extensive analysis was conducted that addressed a variety of transportation and parking alternatives which concluded that these alternatives would provide less than adequate accessibility for the major uses within the Central Mesa area of Balboa Park.

Consequently, the Promenade Project complies with the Master Plan policy that there be no expansion of existing parking areas and no new parking facilities located within the Park unless: "It is demonstrated that off-site parking and/or transportation alternatives have not, after an adequate period of testing and use, provided adequate accessibility; and an equal or greater amount of useable open parkland is recovered through the provision of parking facilities."

The proposed project includes new and expanded onsite parking facilities that would replace and expand upon the existing parking in the North Prado and Zoo Parking Lot areas. Prior to development of the proposed project plan amendments, extensive analysis was conducted that addressed a variety of transportation and parking alternatives which concluded that these alternatives would provide less than adequate accessibility for the major uses within the Central Mesa area of Balboa Park. These studies are on file at the City of San Diego Development Services Department, 1222 First Avenue, Fifth Floor, San Diego, CA 92101. These studies and a summary of their key contents are listed below.

- a. Working Group. *Final Report of the "Working Group for the Proposed Balboa Park Master and Precise Plan Amendments and the Zoological Society of San Diego Leasehold"* (December 14, 2000) which includes the following information:

Park-wide Parking Needs: Current parking demand and future parking needs presented by representatives of City College, Park and Recreation Department, Naval Hospital, Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB), Zoo, Center City Development Corporation (CCDC), and Balboa Park cultural institutions.

Current Parking Lot Use: Charts and graphs on current parking spaces at

various locations including percent and number occupied on an hourly basis for both a weekend day and a week day.

Existing Traffic Patterns: Diagrams of existing roadway conditions (number of lanes) and current Average Daily Traffic on road segments throughout the Central Mesa.

Detailed Zoo Visitor Attendance Information: Group size, transportation mode, transit use habits, hotel visitor access characteristics, peak hourly admit, peak hourly exit, peak admit time, and peak exit time.

Transit Access: Time/distance from various hotel areas and neighborhoods to the North Prado.

Design Charrette: More than 100 citizens, including Working Group members, collaborated on land use and parking options for the Central Mesa, and subsequently discussed the pros and cons of the 16 design concepts.

- b. Inspiration Point/Remote Parking Feasibility Studies. Detailed information on costs, configuration and physical requirements for a monorail system to connect Inspiration Point and the North Prado. Prepared by Lea+Elliott, (January, 2001) and given to the Balboa Park Committee on August 1, 2002.
- c. Preliminary cost estimates and parking structure size/location. Prepared by San Diego Zoological Society in January 2001 using information from Lea+Elliott and International Parking Design which shared with the public in May 2001 and given again to the Balboa Park Committee on August 1, 2002.
- d. Analysis of the efficacy of creating a primary parking facility at Inspiration Point - people moving requirements and effects on park usage. Prepared by Alan Hoffman of The Mission Group in June 2002 and given to the Balboa Park Committee on August 1, 2002.
- e. Transit Study. Analysis of the opportunities for improving transit to Balboa Park and transit rider-ship. Prepared by Alan Hoffman of The Mission Group and presented to the Natural Resources and Culture Committee in January 2002 and given to the Balboa Park Committee on August 1, 2002.

Additionally, the proposed project would result in a greater amount of usable open parkland than proposed in the existing Balboa Park Master Plan.

Almost all of the amendments being proposed to the existing plans for the Park are necessary to allow these gains - for example, plan amendments are necessary to allow the underground parking structure and the conversion of the parking lots near Spanish Village to promenade use. The other amendments affect details rather than core policies - for example, there will be some minor adjustments to the Zoo's leasehold. Major policies

will remain the same, and the Park Boulevard Promenade is consistent with them.

7. How does the City ensure appropriate development of the zoological gardens without a master plan?

The proposed Balboa Park Promenade project does not require a master plan amendment for several reasons.

- a. There are no existing requirements, either by City ordinance or other regulation, that require "master plans" be prepared for City-owned land. Master plans are prepared when desired, or necessary, to plan for and direct future development of an area or park. The most common master plans on City-owned land in the City of San Diego are park-wide master plans, such as the Balboa Park Master Plan and the Mission Bay Park Master Plan. Master plans for development on City lands by separate leaseholders have varied in content and requirements based on the circumstances, terms and conditions for any proposed use of City land.
- b. The Zoological Society of San Diego has operated and maintained the zoological gardens for the City since 1916. While the City owns the plants and animals, the Zoological Society is responsible for the care and maintenance of the zoological gardens, as well as the parking lot in front of the Zoo, as stated in the existing lease. The existing Zoo lease also specifies the uses allowed within the zoological gardens and in effect functions as the "master plan." The lease specifies that 99.43 acres are zoological gardens and 24.67 acres are a public parking lot. The zoological garden is where the care and maintenance of "all the animals, birds, reptiles, plants and their progeny and project, as well as all exhibits and personal property belonging to City" occurs. Article V of the lease also specifies types of merchandise sales and rentals allowed. The additional exhibit area is limited to animal exhibits and 6.5 percent of the land area for the entire Zoo leasehold is allowed for restaurants and gift shops. One-third of the restaurants and gift shops would be located near the zoo entry. This is the same percentage of commercial uses that exist today. Additionally, the proposed Park Boulevard Promenade project includes restrictions to reduce impacts outside of the leasehold area. The project requires height limits and setbacks for future Zoo development to eliminate any impacts outside the Zoo boundary. The goal of these limitations is to ensure the Zoo has no impacts outside its boundaries than exist today.
- c. The Zoological Society presented detailed reports and information on its space needs to the Working Group for the proposed Balboa Park Master and Precise Plan Amendments and the Zoological Society of San Diego Leasehold, which convened for 25 meetings between January 2000 and December 2000. Additionally, in 1984, the Zoo prepared a plan for the continued update of the old concrete/moat animal exhibits. In their place would be new bioclimatic exhibits,

such as a Gorilla Tropics and Tiger River. This plan helped the Zoo gauge its space needs for development of the bioclimatic exhibits and prompted the initiation of the plan amendment process that has resulted in the Park Boulevard Promenade project. This 1984 Zoo plan was also distributed to the Working Group at its May 11, 2000 meeting, along with a Zoo report that specifically examined the space needs of the Zoo. The topic at that meeting was specifically focused on the land uses within the Zoo and the Zoo's space needs.

- d. There are distinct differences between the Zoological Society leasehold and the lease agreements for SeaWorld and the Japanese Friendship Garden. In 1961, when SeaWorld was first proposed on vacant land in Mission Bay Park, the City required a detailed, phased "development plan" for the SeaWorld lease to ensure the timely development of the theme park. The City wanted exhibits and attractions constructed in a certain phasing schedule, at a specified cost, to ensure that a high quality tourist attraction was developed in a reasonable period of time. SeaWorld opened to the public in 1964. The SeaWorld master plan was last updated in 2001, the purpose of which was to delineate the areas for the increased height of future rides, attractions and shows in the theme park as a result of an increase in the height limit from 30 feet to 159.5 feet that had been approved in a prior referendum. Since the leasehold parcel was exempted from the 30-foot height limit, the City wanted to make sure the placement of higher development was closely monitored. Although four known short-term developments were precisely located, long-term development areas were identified in bubble diagrams with no specific projects. The question of whether or not the proposed SeaWorld expansion would exceed the 25% limitation on commercial development policy of the Mission Bay Master Plan was not the purpose of requiring a master plan. Unlike SeaWorld, which was proposing rides, attractions and shows, the Zoo is proposing only more exhibits, with a small amount of commercial use, similar to the uses that exist today.

In the case with the Japanese Friendship Gardens lease, the City Park and Recreation staff, with an outside consultant, prepared a master plan for development of the Japanese Garden in 1981. Three years later, the City entered into a lease agreement with a private, non-profit organization to implement the plan. It was stipulated that the Japanese Gardens must comply with strict historic and traditional requirements. The City ensured this compliance by preparing a precise plan, then requiring implementation of that plan in the lease.

- e. The City of San Diego's Real Estate Assets Department, which administers the City's leases on City-owned property, generally requests a "development plan" that includes a description of the types of improvements and dollar amounts that the lessee is proposing to invest in the property. This information is used for the purpose of determining the terms of the lease. The Zoological Society is not

pursuing any amendments to their existing leasehold at this time. Any necessary documentation will be requested at the time the Zoological Society makes the request to the City for an amendment to their lease.

f. Additionally, the Balboa Park Committee didn't see the need for a master plan, as long as the uses within the Zoo's leasehold were focused on zoological gardens with minimal commercial uses. The Balboa Park Committee made the following recommendation:

- The Zoological Society will stipulate that inside the Zoo, use of the additional exhibit area is limited to Zoological Gardens, animal exhibits and a small percentage of commercial use to maintain the existing balance of uses that exist today. The actual percentage of exhibit to a commercial space will be included in any revisions to the lease agreement between the City and the Zoo and in any amendments to the Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan and the Master Plan.
- 93.5% of all (existing and proposed expansion) of the zoological gardens would be used for animal and botanical exhibits and facilities support. 6.5% or less of all (existing and proposed expansion) would be used for restaurants and gift shops. Percentage of uses and the location of restaurant and gift shops will be updated yearly to the Balboa Park Committee.

Notwithstanding the unique nature of the Zoological Society's mission and the relationship between the City and the Zoo, City staff has worked with the Zoological Society to address this concern by adding language to the Balboa Park Master Plan that describes the Zoological Society's leasehold in greater detail, including specified uses, limitations and design criteria. A copy of the proposed language is show in underline in Attachment A.

Finally, one misconception that has arisen recently is that the Balboa Park Master Plan requires that each tenant have its own master plan. This is not true. The actual language of the Balboa Park Master Plan requires only that each tenancy conform to the *park's* Master Plan.

8. Why is the greenbelt designed as it is?

The Park and Recreation staff requested that the greenbelt in the proposed Promenade Project be similar in size and scope to the Pepper Grove greenbelt, which is located south of the project area along Park Boulevard. As designed, the proposed greenbelt is actually larger and more substantial than the existing Pepper Grove greenbelt.

Any large, public project such as the Park Boulevard Promenade must balance several goals. The main purpose of the greenbelt is to provide a wide pathway - a place where people can take a long stroll in a pleasant environment in the middle of an otherwise urban setting. This location and configuration provide a long path for leisurely visits without interfering with other park uses, which would happen if the greenbelt were elsewhere. It will visually connect most of the park's east side, from the Prado to the Zoo's new entry to the Bea Evenson fountain. Finally, it will allow easy pedestrian access to most of the park's interior.

9. How is the Park Boulevard Promenade plan coordinated with the Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking "Jones & Jones" study?

In three ways. First, the Park Boulevard Promenade project will not be built without a financing plan, and that plan in turn will reflect the comprehensive analysis of parking being prepared by Jones & Jones. Second, the two consulting teams have coordinated their efforts. The Jones & Jones team has reviewed the Park Boulevard Promenade project, including the parking structure, and has, at least preliminarily, indicated that it is consistent with their views of the needs of the park. Third, the Zoological Society has agreed not to proceed with its part of the project until the Jones & Jones study has been completed. The Zoological Society's lease with the City currently prohibits using the parking lot for anything other than parking, and as part of this commitment the Zoo has agreed not to change that provision until the Jones & Jones study has been prepared. Thus, the project will not be built without proper coordination.

The Park Boulevard Promenade project proposes a 4,800-space parking structure in a centralized location to serve Zoo and North Prado users in a new multi-level subterranean structure located on a portion of the site of the existing parking lot adjacent to the Zoo and extending south towards the Prado. The Park Boulevard Promenade project also includes a Zoo employee parking lot on the northwestern edge of the existing Zoo leasehold.

The Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking Study Preliminary Draft recommends: a) multiple structures for visitor parking to be distributed at east and west Prado, Palisades and Inspiration Point, b) employee parking to be relocated to more distant locations, c) an efficient shuttle system to link the Park destinations with parking locations and d) a plan to reduce vehicle traffic and enhance the pedestrian character of the plazas and corridors throughout the Park. Phase 1 of the Preliminary Draft for the Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking Study proposes new parking structures at the site of the existing Zoo lot (3,200 - 3,500 spaces, mostly for Zoo visitors), in the vicinity of the archery range to the west of the Museum of Man (700- 75- spaces, mostly for Prado visitors), at Inspiration Point (1,500 - 2,000 spaces, for Palisades visitors, overflow from all sites, and for Park and institution employees), and a Zoo employee parking lot on the northwestern edge of the existing Zoo leasehold as proposed in the

Park Boulevard Promenade project. In Phase 2 of the Preliminary Draft study, two additional parking structures are proposed just south of the R.H. Fleet Science Center and east of the Hall of Champions, as visitor demand grows.

The two planning efforts are compatible in that: 1) a large parking structure is desired and needed in the North Prado, 2) a Zoo employee parking lot is recommended to be located in the northwestern corner of the existing Zoo leasehold, 3) a green belt/pedestrian Promenade is recommended along Park Boulevard, and 4) a large portion of the existing Zoo parking lot be returned to park use, which includes Zoo exhibits.

The size of the Park Boulevard Promenade parking structure is proposed to be 4,800 spaces based on parking demand studies and input from stakeholder groups as part of the Working Group process. The Park Boulevard Promenade parking structure proposal addresses the parking needs of the Zoo and the North Prado area and was never intended to be a park-wide solution.

The Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation Parking Study Phase 1 proposes to place three parking structures in the Prado area to satisfy parking demand. Future parking demand studies that will be conducted as part of the Balboa Park Land, Use, Circulation and Parking Study will produce more refined data on where and how many parking spaces are needed for visitors and employees in 2020. These future studies will also be looking at traffic impacts, visual quality issues and other similar considerations. With these new studies, the appropriate mix of structure/parking area size and location to serve Park visitors will then be determined. If the studies show that the option of the three structures reduce the parking need for the Zoo, the Park Promenade structure could be reduced from the proposed 4,800 spaces to 3,200 - 3,500 spaces.

In recognition of the importance of these future studies, City staff recommends that for the interim, both the Preliminary Draft for the Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking Study and the Park Boulevard Promenade project show the North Prado parking structure size as 3,200 - 4,800 spaces.

10. If the Park Boulevard Promenade won't be implemented until after the Jones and Jones study is done, why not delay approval of the Park Boulevard Promenade until then?

In 1998 and early 1999, the Zoological Society examined its own needs in isolation and proposed a plan amendment that would have allowed its expansion into several other areas of Balboa Park and placed a parking structure on the War Memorial Building site. Because of extensive negative public reaction to that plan, the Zoological Society pledged to start over with a planning effort that included exhaustive public involvement. The Working Group was formed, representing 40 diverse interests. Members of that group met twice a month for one year. They were adamant that the Zoo's needs be looked at in

the context of all of Balboa Park and the surrounding communities. In the end, the Working Group members themselves drafted the final report because they didn't want their viewpoints filtered through City staff or anyone else. Working Group members had started the process wanting each of their particular needs addressed. Although no one member of the group received everything they wanted, the final Working Group report balanced the needs of all the diverse interests.

The Working Group final report set forth specific guidance for the Zoo. Specifically, the Zoo was told to stay within its own leasehold and to create more open parkland. In May 2001, the Zoo shared its proposal, complying with those guidelines, and subsequently proceeded with the development review process. A little over two years later, the project is undergoing the formal public hearing process for final action by the City Council.

Some people have suggested that the Park Boulevard Promenade project be delayed because of the recently started Balboa Park Land Use, Circulation and Parking study. Some fear that the Park Boulevard Promenade could be implemented prior to consideration of any recommendations from Jones and Jones. To address this fear, the Zoological Society has agreed to the following specific safeguards:

- The lease amendments that enable the parking structure and Zoo expansion into the parking lot will not be approved at this time.
- The EIR and plan amendments will specify that the parking structure must be built prior to Zoo expansion into the parking lot.
- The resolution approving the plan amendments will specify that implementation will not occur until the Jones and Jones recommendations and possible plan amendments have been considered.
- The Zoological Society has agreed to bear the risk that the Park Boulevard Promenade plan amendments might be amended by the subsequent Jones and Jones study plan amendments.

Although the proposed Park Boulevard Promenade plan amendments could be amended again later, adopting them now provides several benefits to the City.

- The Final EIR for the Park Boulevard Promenade project has examined numerous traffic, parking and other environmental issues that must be examined during the Jones and Jones plan amendment process. If the Park Boulevard Promenade Final EIR is certified, the City would be able to build upon that previously certified EIR, thus reducing the cost and time necessary for preparing the environmental review for the Jones and Jones plan amendments. Instead of having to prepare an environmental impact report based on no previous studies, the Jones and Jones

plan amendments could rely on previous studies and possibly require only a subsequent environmental impact report to analyze any new or different environmental issues arising from the Jones and Jones plan amendments.

- Adopting the Park Boulevard Promenade plan amendments as scheduled would validate the extensive, years-long public process to which the Zoological Society committed itself. The Park Boulevard Promenade plan amendments are based on a solid foundation of community involvement, in which stakeholders insisted that the planning be done in the context of all of Balboa Park. Failure to recognize the validity of this public process, could discourage other applicants from voluntarily agreeing to go through such an exhaustive public involvement process in the future.

- Allowing the proposed Park Boulevard Promenade project to proceed is supported by stakeholders involved throughout the process. Assembly Member Christine Kehoe and Councilmember Toni Atkins were instrumental in obtaining state funding for the Jones and Jones study. Both of those elected officials have sent letters stating that it was not their intent for the Jones and Jones study be used as a mechanism to delay the Park Boulevard Promenade. In a letter dated June 19, 2003 to the Balboa Park Committee, Assembly Member Kehoe wrote: "I do not believe that the [Jones and Jones] study requires or would benefit from bringing a halt to the Zoo's process until the consulting work by Jones and Jones is final. . . . Rather, I respectfully ask the committee members to consider the Zoo's commitment to delay all construction of its Promenade Project until the Traffic and Circulation study is complete and a public financing plan is developed. That will allow to resolve any issues that may arise between the two concepts and allow us to move forward with a coordinated and harmonious project that will improve our beautiful park for decades to come."

Similarly, Councilmember Atkins wrote to the Balboa Park Committee on May 22, 2003 as follows: "By any standard, it would be unfair to put an abrupt halt to the Zoo's public approval process at this point, as has been suggested. . . . [A]s stated in the written agreement with the City, the Zoo has committed that, if their proposed plan amendment is approved, they will not proceed with the implementation of any part of the Park Boulevard project . . . nor will they begin to seek funding for it, until the Balboa Park Parking, Circulation and Land Use Study is complete. Additionally, the Zoo has acknowledged that any plan amendments approved for their project will be subject to revision by Jones and Jones' more comprehensive effort. "I believe that, given these commitments, moving forward with processing the Zoo's proposal is not only a fair way of treating the Zoo, but is also safe from a planning perspective."

11. How and when will a financing plan be devised?

The City will be discussing financing as part of the park-wide Land Use, Circulation and Parking study. No specific date has been set for a City Council decision because analyses are still being conducted. However, the financing plan will be the subject of open, public hearings at the City, so members of the public will be able to participate.

Some people have been concerned that the project could proceed without a financing plan. The proposed Park Boulevard Promenade project involves more than the Zoo's proposed exhibit expansion project; it is a large public improvement project for Balboa Park. Consequently, without public financing, the project cannot be built. Not even the re-use of the existing Zoo parking lot could occur because part of the proposed project amends the Balboa Park Master Plan to require that replacement parking be available before the Zoo parking lot is converted.

Finally, as for the timing of the financing plan, a number of people expressed concern that moving forward with a financing plan solely for the Park Boulevard Promenade project would negatively effect the City's ability to obtain future financing to address park-wide parking and/or infrastructure needs. To address this concern, the Zoological Society agreed that it will not proceed with a financing plan until the City decided upon one park-wide parking solution. At such time, the City, Balboa Park institutions, the Zoological Society and the public will work together to obtain financing for not only the Park Promenade project, but the broader park-wide land use, circulation and parking solution.

12. Will parking associated with the new downtown ballpark impact Balboa Park?

It has been suggested recently that the proposed Promenade Project fails to address parking impacts associated with the new downtown ballpark. Specifically, it was suggested that parking facilities in Balboa Park, particularly the parking lot located at Inspiration Point, could be used for ballpark-related parking. However, as described in the Final EIR for the ballpark project, parking impacts associated with the new ballpark are fully mitigated through the implementation of various mitigation measures. Moreover, the San Diego Padres recently distributed a parking brochure which identifies *all available surface lots and garages* located downtown to be utilized by ballpark patrons. There are approximately 30,000 parking spaces downtown west of I-5. The Padres parking plan reserves 11,000 of those spaces for ballpark patrons who prepay for parking. Although some of the paid parking facilities identified in the Padres plan appear to be located as far from the ballpark as the Inspiration Point parking lot, the ballpark facilities are located in close proximity to transit facilities (primarily the trolley) which link parking areas directly to the new ballpark. They are, therefore, much more convenient for ballpark visitors than any parking in Balboa Park. In addition, the traffic study for the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Park Boulevard Promenade included all traffic from the ballpark as part of the traffic model. Therefore, all potential combined traffic impacts for the two projects have

been analyzed and mitigated.

Attachment A

To address the concern raised at the Design Review Committee meeting on October 8, 2003 regarding a description of the Zoo, staff is recommending adding a new section in the Balboa Park Master Plan to describe the Zoological Society's leasehold.

The new description will be inserted on p. 49 of the Balboa Park Master Plan in the Conceptual Subarea section entitled Zoo Parking Lot and Florida Canyon (starting as the 3rd new paragraph)

The new section will read as follows:

Zoological Gardens

The Zoological Society of San Diego has operated and maintained the zoological gardens (the San Diego Zoo) for the City since 1916. Although the City has given the Zoological Society custody and complete responsibility for the preservation, maintenance and care of the animal and plant collections, the animals and plants (with some exceptions such as the special relationship with China regarding the giant pandas), belong to the City and as such are regional assets for the citizens of San Diego. The existing Zoo lease specifies that 99.43 acres are zoological gardens and 24.67 acres are a public parking lot. The existing Zoo lease also specifies the allowable uses within the zoological gardens.

The zoological garden is defined as the area where the care and maintenance of Aall the animals, birds, reptiles, plants and their progeny and project as well as all exhibits and personal property belonging to City@ occurs. The existing lease also specifies types of merchandise sales and rentals allowed within the zoological garden, that is Ato rent cameras, strollers, and other equipment for the accommodation of visitors, to sell within and about the Gardens food, beverages, refreshments, gift items, film, printed material, curios, souvenirs, and other merchandise or services ordinarily available to visitors to zoological gardens.@

The new zoological gardens are proposed to be located on a portion of the existing parking lot. The additional exhibit area will be limited to animal and botanical exhibits with related visitor services and animal and plant care facilities. No thrill rides, roller coasters or hotels will be allowed. Not more than 6.5 percent of the land area for the entire Zoo leasehold may be used for restaurants and gift shops, and such uses shall be limited in scope to only provide services ordinarily available to visitors to the zoological gardens. Approximately one-third of the restaurants and gift shops would be located near the Zoo entry.

For that portion of the proposed zoological gardens that would be adjacent to the proposed miniature train leasehold along Park Boulevard, building heights within 50 feet of the leasehold boundary would be limited to 35 feet. Building styles within the first 100 feet of the leasehold

boundary adjacent to Park Boulevard shall be unobtrusive and shall not be visible from outside the Zoo. In this same area adjacent to Park Boulevard, landscaping shall screen Zoo exhibits and buildings.

Future development of the zoological gardens shall be based on the latest science and knowledge regarding design, construction, operations and maintenance of zoological gardens. Future development of the zoological gardens shall reflect that over time zoos have changed from menageries of animals in cages to concrete and moated exhibits, and finally the latest transition B conservation-oriented, bioclimatic habitats. Modern zoos facilitate conservation and research activities needed to save endangered and threatened species by undertaking the following:

: Researchers and animal care specialists learn about animal reproduction, diet and social behavior contributing to saving species in the wild.

: Visitors are educated about the natural history and geography of animals, as well as the plight of endangered species related to habitat loss and encroachment resulting from human activities.

· Animal reproduction contributes to genetic diversity and self-sustaining populations of species while increasing opportunities to reintroduce species to remaining safe habitats in the wild.

As much as feasible and consistent with the latest scientific discoveries, zoological gardens development shall create self-sustaining populations of threatened and endangered species and enhance scientific research, conservation and education opportunities. Development shall address animal behavior as it relates to both environmental considerations (such as the bioclimatic zones) and their complex social order.